

## The Day of Pentecost

June 4, 2017

### Pentecost Sunday

*"I've been attending non-liturgical churches my entire life. Even though many of these churches have begun to embrace many of the gifts of the liturgical calendar (Advent, Ash Wednesday, and Lent come to mind), I don't recall observing Pentecost Sunday even once. So, I decided to do some digging.*

*Pentecost, according to the calendar, is one of the hinge points in the Christian story. So why haven't I known much about it?*

*"Maybe part of the reason those of us from non-liturgical and, especially, not-so-charismatic traditions tend to overlook Pentecost Sunday is the fact that the incident it celebrates really does seem just a little spooky." Carolyn Arends, "Happy Birthday, Dear Church", Christianity Today, May 2017*

- Pentecost is the birthday of the Church, when the believers gathered in Jerusalem were filled with the Holy Spirit.
- There are some Christian churches/denominations who do not recognize Pentecost as a Christian holy day.
- The English word "Pentecost" comes from the Greek word pentekostos, which means "fifty" or "fifty days."
- Pentecost Sunday is 50 days after Jesus' resurrection (Easter Sunday) and 10 days after Jesus' ascension.
- The Jews also celebrated Pentecost or "Shavuot" meaning literally "Weeks" for seven weeks. Originally a harvest festival from Leviticus 23:16, this holiday celebrated the giving of the Ten Commandments 50 days after Passover.
- The Jewish Pentecost and Christian Pentecost are not related contextually in anyway. The link between the two is the 50 days.

### Acts 1:13-15 NASB

13 When they had entered the city, they went up to the upper room where they were staying; that is, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas the son of James.

14 **These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer**, along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

15 At this time Peter stood up in the midst of the brethren (**a gathering of about one hundred and twenty persons was there together**), and said...

**Acts 2:41 NASB** "...that day (*Pentecost*) there were added about three thousand souls."

**Acts 2:1 NASB**

**1** When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place.

**"...all together in one place..."** (*how the Church was birthed is how the Church is to be today*)

**Ephesians 2:21-22 NASB**

**21** in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord,  
**22** in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

**Hebrews 10:24-25 NASB**

**24** let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,  
**25** not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another;  
and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

*"There is an ongoing silent migration away from the church of an estimated 3,500 individuals each and every day. A 2014 study indicated that over 1.2 million people will leave the church in the next year."*

*"Several factors are contributing to this trend, but the majority of individuals who are leaving the church report that they no longer feel connected. Can this be reversed? Can the church connect with these people before it is too late?"*

-- The Christian Post, "3500 People Leave the Church Every Day", May 27, 2015

*"One hundred religious persons knit into a unity by careful organization do not constitute a church any more than eleven dead men make a football team." — A.W. Tozer*

*"This movement away from the church has been ongoing for several decades. The number of churches that are closing their doors every year is leading to an overall decline in church attendance. In 2015, it is estimated that over 10,000 churches will close their doors. This has led to a growing host of Christians who no longer have a place to connect with other believers. In fact, The Barna Group reports that the average size of a church congregation in America is just 89 adults. That means for each church door that closes, almost 100 people are left without a spiritual home."*

-- The Christian Post, "3500 People Leave the Church Every Day", May 27, 2015

*"I know many congregations are struggling. And I fully expect we will continue to have a net loss of churches for the next several years."*

-- Thom Rainer, "9 Hopeful Signs About The Church's Future", June 1, 2017

**2 Thessalonians 2:1-3 NASB**

**1** Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him,

**2** that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.

**3** Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,

**The responsibility for the “silent migration” out of church rests in two places:**

1. *people who come to church for selfish motives (God is not enough)*
2. *the pastors and churches that cater to those selfish motives*

**To prevent people (and money) from leaving, a ministry must either:**

1. *become domineering, authoritative, controlling, intimidating*
2. *resort to marketing strategies, sales gimmicks, celebrity leaders, doctrinal compromise, people-pleasing*

**“...all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer...” (Acts 1:14)**

**Matthew 5:3-4 NASB**

**3 Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

**4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.**

*“The ‘poor in spirit’ are the spiritually humble who feel no self-esteem, self-importance or pride, and have no confidence in the flesh. This principle is the foundation of the deeper life, for until we have experienced it the deeper life is impossible.” Hobart Freeman, “Deeper Life” p. 158*

**Philippians 3:3 NASB**

**“...for we...glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh...”**

**Revelation 3:17 NASB**

**17 Because you say, “I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,” and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.**

**2 Corinthians 3:4-6 NASB**

**4 Such confidence we have through Christ toward God.**

**5 Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God,**

**6 who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.**

**Zechariah 4:6 NASB**

**6 Then he said to me, “This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel saying, ‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ says the LORD of hosts.**

*The more educated, organized and coordinated by human strategies and methods, the less the Holy Spirit will move. “...decently and in order...” (1 Cor 14:40) does not mean the life of the Holy Spirit being choked out by human orchestration.*

*"If the Holy Spirit was withdrawn from the church today, 95 percent of what we do would go on and no one would know the difference. If the Holy Spirit had been withdrawn from the New Testament church, 95 percent of what they did would stop, and everybody would know the difference." — A.W. Tozer*

*"I remind you that there are churches so completely out of the hands of God that if the Holy Spirit withdrew from them, they wouldn't find it out for many months." — A.W. Tozer, Tozer Pulpit*

## **The Holy Spirit in the life of the Church**

**Acts 4:31** NASB

**31 And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness.**

*We can't force the Holy Spirit to move or manifest in a certain way, but we can make ourselves available.*

**Acts 5:3** NASB

3 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back some of the price of the land?"

*The Holy Spirit is the divine, invisible and presiding superintendent of all church assemblies. He sees all, knows all and will move to protect the purity and innocence of our gatherings.*

**Acts 10:44** NASB

**44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message.**

*When was the last time the Holy Spirit fell upon believers listening to Bible teaching?*

**Acts 13:2** NASB

**2 While they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."**

*The Holy Spirit initiates and gives birth to the ministries and activities within the assembly. The Church is not to consist of clever and appealing man-made marketing and media techniques and strategies.*

**Acts 19:6** NASB

**6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking with tongues and prophesying.**

*"I believe that entertainment and amusements are the work of the Enemy to keep dying men from knowing they're dying; and to keep enemies of God from remembering that they're enemies." — A.W. Tozer*

*“The world is perishing for lack of the knowledge of God and the Church is famishing for want of His Presence.” — A.W. Tozer, The Pursuit of God*

**Acts 2:2-4 NASB**

**2 And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.**

**3 And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them.**

**4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.**

### **Why speaking in tongues to birth the Church?**

*Why not prophecy? Why not the working of miracles? Why not the gift of healing? Why not the gift of evangelism or teaching?*

- 1. So God would receive all the glory - man would receive no glory.**
- 2. So no human wisdom or strategy would be mingled with God’s method.**

*The Church was to be birthed supernaturally by the Spirit and power of God. It would not be birthed by the will, methods, efforts or wisdom of man. Therefore God used what was beyond man’s intellect and understanding, so the birth would be exclusively and purely from God, with nothing of man mingled in.*

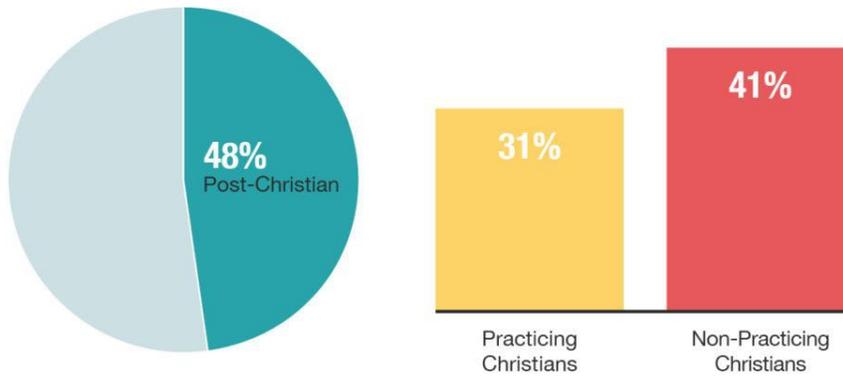
*The Church cannot be birthed by the Holy Spirit but then perpetuated by man and fleshly methods. What birthed the Church must be what sustains the Church through the generations and centuries.*

*“We now demand glamour and fast-flowing dramatic action. A generation of Christians reared among push buttons and automatic machines is impatient of slower and less direct methods of reaching their goals...The tragic results of this spirit all about us: shallow lives, hollow religious philosophies...the glorification of men, trust in religious externalities....salesmanship methods, the mistaking of dynamic personality for the power of the Spirit. These and such of these are the symptoms of an evil disease.”*

— A.W. Tozer, The Pursuit of God

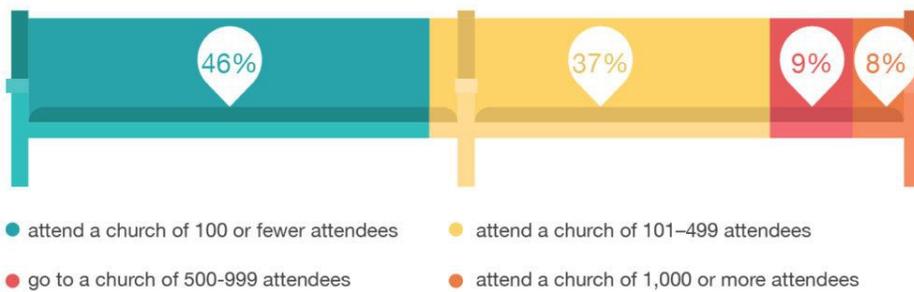
*“It is now common practice in most evangelical churches to offer the people, especially the young people, a maximum of entertainment and a minimum of serious instruction. It is scarcely possible in most places to get anyone to attend a meeting where the only attraction is God. One can only conclude that God’s professed children are bored with Him, for they must be wooed to meeting with a stick of striped candy in the form of religious movies, games and refreshments.” — A.W. Tozer, Man: The Dwelling Place of God*

## HOW AMERICANS PRACTICE THEIR FAITH



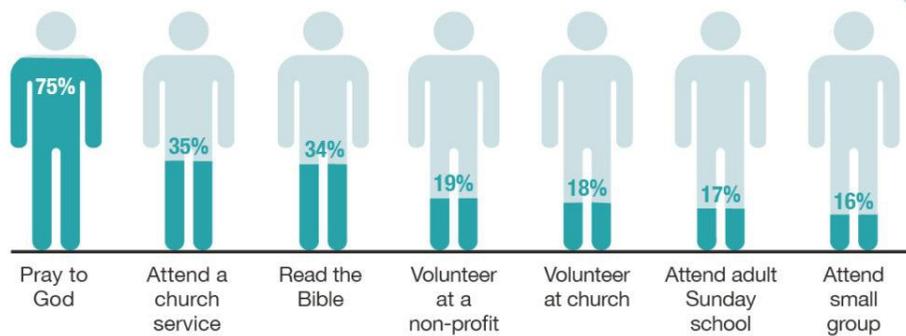
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## HOW AMERICANS EXPERIENCE AND EXPRESS THEIR FAITH



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